

In the Claims:

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c) and the Revised Amendment Practice effective July 30, 2003, please amend the claims of the application as indicated herein. Pursuant to Rule 121(c), a complete listing of all claims in the application is provided below.

COMPLETE LISTING OF ALL CLAIMS IN THE APPLICATION

Claims 1-10 (canceled).

11. (currently amended) A process for thermal splicing optical fibers comprising:
directing a laser beam to an impingement point on the optical fibers; and
moving the laser beam according to a frequency such that a position of the impingement point is periodically moved in the longitudinal direction of the optical fibers in a predetermined area around a splicing point of the optical fibers;
wherein the frequency of the movement of the laser is such that the duration of one period of the position of the impingement point is shorter than the thermal time constant of the optical fibers, and wherein the speed of the movement of the impingement point is changed for modulation of the movement of the impingement point with a predetermined frequency of the movement of the laser beam.
12. (previously presented) A process according to claim 11, wherein the movement of the impingement point and the intensity of the laser beam are modulated to provide an optimized output profile onto the optical fibers.
13. (canceled) A process according to claim 12, wherein the speed of the movement of the impingement point is changed for modulation of the movement of the impingement point with a predetermined frequency of the movement of the laser beam.
14. (previously presented) A process according to claim 12, wherein the output of a laser is

10/508,752

E-HE-0033

Page 2

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

changed for the modulation of the intensity of the laser beam.

15. (previously presented) A process according to claim 12, wherein the modulation of the intensity of the laser beam is synchronized with the modulation of the movement of the impingement point.

16. (currently amended) A device for thermal splicing optical fibers with a laser, the device comprising:

at least one lens for focusing at least one laser beam from the laser;

at least one optical component for directing the at least one laser beam onto the optical fibers to be spliced; and

a driver unit associated with the at least one optical component such that a position of an impingement point of the laser beam onto the optical fibers to be spliced is moved periodically in the longitudinal direction of the optical fibers, wherein the laser has an associated laser control unit, in which the intensity of the laser beam is modulated in conjunction with the movement of the optical component.

17. (previously presented) A device according to claim 16, further comprising a driver control unit for controlling the driver unit associated with the optical component to manipulate the speed of the movement of the impingement point.

18. (canceled) A device according to claim 17, further comprising a laser control unit allocated to the laser for modulating the intensity of the laser beam.

19. (currently amended) A device according to claim ~~17~~ 18, wherein the driver control unit and the laser control unit are connected to a central control unit.